Gazette 8/6/98

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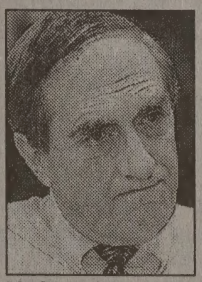
WASHINGTON

# House rejects Hefley bid to eliminate safeguards for gay federal workers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a setback for conservatives, the House on Wednesday rejected a proposal by Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colorado Springs, to void a Clinton executive order forbidding discrimination against gay men and lesbians in the federal work force.

In an election year in which Republicans have repeatedly taken on the gay community in word and in votes, the 252-176 roll-call vote had Democrats joined by about 40 Republicans who said the proposal went too far.



**Hefley: Measure finds opposition within GOP.**

The Colorado delegation split along party lines with the four Republicans voting for Hefley's proposal and the two Democrats voting against it.

"I speak strongly in my outrage that some on my side of the aisle, my leaders in particular, have sought to make this a political issue," said Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn.

The issue arose as the House moved toward passage of a $34 billion measure for fiscal year 1999, beginning Oct. 1, for the departments of Commerce, Justice and State plus the federal courts.

The Hefley amendment was aimed at a May 28 Clinton executive order adding sexual orientation to the categories of federal workers against whom discrimination is illegal. The others are race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disabilities and age.

Although some Republicans said the order would lead to quotas for hiring gay men and lesbians, Hefley said his amendment was aimed at the president's abuse of executive orders to circumvent Congress.

"This amendment . . . is not about homosexuality, this amendment is not about discrimination," Hefley said.

Opponents disagreed.

"In this election season, the Republican leadership has decided that it's in their political interest to side with the ignorance and bigotry of the radical right," said Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y.

Earlier this year, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., compared being gay to kleptomania.

## BRIEFING

**Government opens Alaskan area to oil drilling:** In a lop[illegible] victory for

# Clinton aides visit c

## Ickes testifies, Breuer attends closed hearing

The New York Times

WASHINGTON — As Monica Lewinsky prepared Wednesday to testify before a grand jury, independent counsel Kenneth Starr continued to take testimony at the federal courthouse in Washington.

Former deputy White House chief of staff Harold Ickes was at the courthouse for more than six hours.

Ickes first testified before this grand jury two weeks ago, after several Secret Service employees were summoned to recount the president's routines in and around the Oval Office.

**Breuer: Met with judge over refusal to answer prosecutors.**

As he left the courthouse Wednesday, Ickes refused to talk about his testimony, telling reporters, "I'm done and I hope never to come back."

Two Secret Service officers, out of five summoned to the courthouse, also testified Wednesday.

White House special counsel Lanny Breuer returned briefly to the courthouse, but he did not testify. Instead, he attended a closed hearing before Judge Norma Holloway Johnson over his refusal to answer prosecutors on grounds of executive privilege and attorney-client privilege, accordi[ng] [to] those familiar with the dispute.

[Co]urt ruled

**Former White House deputy chief of Washington on Wednesday. Ickes te**

ruling that government lawyers had gation to cooperate in a criminal in tion.

In its decision, the Appeals Cour[t] [ru]led government lawyers may still [be] [ex]empted by executive privilege, in [so]me circumstances, and that finding app[lie]s when the White House [in]voked the privilege to shield [co]nversations.

[Th]e case again ha[s]